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PROGRAMME PLANNING

Country and intercountry programmes and projects

FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR TUNISIA

Note by the Administrator

1. The fifth country programme for Tunisia, covering the period 1992-1996, is the result of a long preparation process which involved the participation, over many months, of the Government, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) office in Tunis, the Regional Bureau for Arab States and Europe and the other departments concerned at headquarters.

I. PROCESS OF THE PROGRAMMING EXERCISE

2. Along with the Government, UNDP played a key role in the programme preparation process, particularly in the elaboration of the advisory note, which was the fundamental step in the process.

3. In order to prepare the advisory note, a detailed analysis was made of all the information on Tunisia's national development strategy and priorities. The programming process also coincided with the preparation of the eighth national development plan, covering the same period as the country programme. The information, findings and recommendations of the mid-term review of the fourth country programme and the evaluation of its impact were also widely used and reflected in the note. The sectoral and thematic studies done by national consultants in collaboration with sectoral ministries were an additional source of information, and their recommendations were considered in determining the programme's orientations and in defining areas of concentration. The documents provided by UNDP headquarters, particularly the deliberations of the Governing Council and its decision 90/34 of 23 June 1990, as well as consultations with

certain United Nations agencies, chosen on the basis of areas of concentration in accordance with the Government's wishes, also enriched the programming process and were of particular help in defining and prioritizing technical cooperation needs. As the Government did not consider it opportune for the agencies to conduct programming missions, the agencies' contributions took the form of comments on a preliminary draft of the advisory note. Bilateral donors were also invited to participate in the exercise; they provided information on their own programmes of cooperation, which was taken into account in the selection of sub-areas of concentration.

4. The programming process was supervised jointly by the Ministry of Planning, which is the central coordinating ministry, and the UNDP office in Tunis on the basis of continuous dialogue throughout the process; this led, inter alia, to the determination of the general orientation and of priority needs and to the definition of design criteria and modalities of financing, execution and coordination of the programme.

II. FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR TUNISIA

A. Analytical comments on the programme

5. The programme fully reflects the proposals and views expressed in the advisory note, with regard not only to programme objectives but also to priority areas, utilization of resources and mobilization of substantial funds through cost-sharing. It is perfectly integrated into the national development strategy, and reflects the very great convergence of views between the Government and UNDP on all of the areas covered by the programming exercise.

B. National development strategy

6. Development activities in Tunisia are undertaken in the context of a comprehensive and coherent approach which reconciles the economic and social dimensions on the basis of principles and constants, the foremost of these being the need to restore economic efficiency, to guarantee food security and to ensure equitable distribution of the fruits of growth. Over the five years of the eighth national development plan, Tunisia will pursue the efforts it has undertaken in the areas of liberalization of investment, restructuring of the economy, deregulation and debureaucratization in order to adapt its economic and institutional structures to the demands of export, industrial integration, technological advancement and reinforcement of decentralization.

C. Programme objectives

7. The fifth country programme is designed to contribute to the realization of the following priority development objectives:

(a) Restructuring, liberalization and development of economic performance and competitiveness;

(b) Increase in agricultural and food production;

(c) Promotion of development that is consistent with environmental preservation requirements;

(d) Consideration of the social aspects of development.

8. The programme also places a high priority on the development of human resources, which is the ultimate aim of all development objectives.

D. Areas of concentration

9. In order to contribute to the realization of these objectives, the programme concentrates on the following areas:

(a) Development of agricultural production;

(b) Support for the industrial and trade adjustment programme;

(c) Environmental protection;

(d) Support for social policies and public service reforms.

E. Special themes

10. The specific themes proposed by the Governing Council in its decision 90/34 will be defined in the Tunisian context and will serve, to the extent possible and in a flexible manner, as a frame of reference and a filter for gauging activities in each of the programme's areas of concentration. The following areas will therefore be emphasized:

Advancement of women

11. This theme will naturally find a place in the programme at all stages of the conception, formulation and execution of specific programmes and projects. Special attention will be focused on women in the disadvantaged sections of society.

Utilization of technology

12. This is a specific theme in the industrial sector and an underlying one in the agricultural and environmental sectors.

Poverty alleviation

13. Grass-roots development, community participation, the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the advancement of young people will be taken into

consideration and will be reflected in the priority sectors that have been selected, particularly those of environment and agriculture.

Technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC)

14. This will be pursued and strengthened and approached in a more imaginative way by planning activities involving not only the exchange of skills and experiences, but also training, complementarity and regional integration. Particular attention will be given to strengthening cooperation among the States of the Arab Maghreb Union. In this regard, systematic and increasing assistance from the Regional Bureau for Arab States and Europe will be envisaged in a coordinated and rational way in order to support the economic integration efforts of the member countries of the Arab Maghreb Union and to strengthen cooperation between the Union and its partners, particularly those in the European Economic Community.

Environment

15. Although the environment constitutes an area of concentration of the programme of cooperation, it will be dealt with horizontally throughout the entire programme.

Management development

16. Management development will also be a determining factor in the elaboration of the activities of the programme as a whole.

17. The Tunisian Government has added two themes to this framework, which take on particular importance in the national context, namely:

(a) Promotion of the private sector: The programme will support the Government's efforts to mobilize and strengthen the role of the private sector in the development process and to create an environment favourable to its activities;

(b) Promotion of pre-investment activities: Among the various project activities, emphasis will be placed on specific studies, including feasibility, socio-economic cost-effectiveness and marketing studies.

F. Mobilization of additional resources

18. In order to maximize its impact, the programme will require the mobilization of funds in addition to the indicative planning figure (IPF). One of the features of this programme is the importance it places on co-financing. In this regard, the Government plans to use the country programme as a catalyst to mobilize such additional funds by sharing the cost of projects. The national budget, loans to be contracted with certain multilateral organizations and programmes of cooperation with bilateral donors have been identified as sources of co-financing. Other non-IPF funds and mechanisms, such as Special Programme Resources (SPR), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Management Development Programme and the UNDP/NGO Partners in Development Programme, will also be drawn upon.

19. Overall, an indicative amount of $3 million has been set as a minimum target for co-financing, that is three times the amount of co-financing realized in the fourth cycle.

G. Coordination

20. The country programme will serve as an instrument with which the Government can strengthen its coordination of external technical assistance. More specifically, the programme will facilitate coordination of the operational activities of the United Nations system in Tunisia and the establishment of complementarity links among the system's activities.

21. Co-ordination will be maintained as a matter of priority in such areas as the environment, inter alia with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Food Programme (WFP) and other donors planning activities in these areas.

III. MANAGEMENT OF THE FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME

A. National execution

22. National execution of projects, and particularly execution by the Government, will be strengthened. In order to ensure national execution which is full and complete at the operational level, steps should be taken both to train national directors, including in the assimilation of UNDP methods and procedures, so as to strengthen the technical and administrative capacities of the national partners, and to simplify national procedures, particularly those relating to the acquisition of goods and services. Execution of certain projects by national NGOs could also be introduced gradually.

B. Other operational modalities

23. The programme will also make use of the accumulated ability and experience of the specialized and technical agencies of the United Nations system and will seek to maximize this utilization. These agencies could act as cooperating agencies for certain aspects of projects, or as advisory agencies on a selective basis.

24. There will be increased reliance on national expertise, and use of external expertise will be confined to short consultations. Efforts will be made to diversify the sources of consultants (for example, United Nations agencies, TCDC, NGOs, the United Nations International Short-term Advisory Resources (UNISTAR), etc.).

25. The IPF expenditures will be effected in accordance with UNDP's technical cooperation orientation. In this regard, the IPF will not be used to cover operating costs, which will be financed by the national counterpart, and a proper balance will be maintained between the categories equipment, experts/consultants and training.

26. Particular attention will be given to project monitoring and evaluation: tripartite review, post-evaluation, field visits, etc. Projects financed under the programme will be examined in detail by an internal committee at the UNDP field office level, which will, where necessary, call on specialists in the areas concerned for an opinion. The entire programme will be reviewed annually in the context of continuous programming, and will be subject to a mid-term review at least once during the cycle in order to take account of changes in the economic situation and to make any adjustments that may be necessary.

IV. RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

27. The Administrator recommends that the Governing Council approve the fifth country programme for Tunisia.